

A Pentecost Prayer to the Holy Spirit

By Father Nick

Genesis 1:2

O'er formless void you were deployed
Before all time began,
And sought to trace o'er waters face
God's new creation plan.
O'er chaos dark you did embark
To do what God had deemed,
And to and fro you flew so low
In service to God's dream.
Chaotic strife lurks in my life
To undermine God's ways;
O Spirit true, guide my life, too;
With purpose fill my days.

Job 33:4

Poor Job who fell, as scriptures tell,
From heights of wealth and ease,
Was tested sore down to his core
By famine and disease.
Yet when most low in depths of woe
And frightened was of death,
To friends he came and made the claim:
You saved him with God's breath
And when, dear friend, I sense the end
Of my own desp'rate rope,
O Spirit dear, restore my cheer
And fill my heart with hope.

Mark 13:11

Lord Jesus said to those in dread
of torture for his sake,
They ought not fret despite the threat
When they their witness make.
If some bring suit and persecute
And tempt them to betray,
Then in their need you intercede
And tell them what to say.
When I'm in doubt, and can't sort out
the witness that I must,
O Spirit strong, bear me along;
With courage stoke my trust.

Luke 3:21-22

By Jordan's wave, sick souls to save,
The Baptist makes his cry;
They gather there, the ones who dare,
As Jesus happens by.
From river raised, he stands and prays
As to him you descend
All like a dove from high above
And grace to him extend.
With just one plea I stand like he
Intent to do God's will;
O Spirit free, descend on me
With grace my soul please fill.

John 20:22

Their loss they grieve that Sunday eve,
Lord Jesus' closest friends,
And as they pray, all locked away,
Among them he transcends
Though startled sure they clearly were,
He healing peace declared;
Returned from death, by sacred breath
Your gifts with them he shared.
When I, like they, feel locked away
As consequence of strife
O Spirit kind, refresh my mind,
And fill my thoughts with life

Acts 13:2

When ones like Paul who heard your call
Commissioned were by you,
With faith and praise they spread Christ's ways
Back when the church was new.
Apostles bold his story told
When you inspired each
To bear God's word then undeterred,
To practice and to preach.
And in our day, we humbly pray,
Of wisdom bear our dose;
O Spirit now the church endow
As you fly low and close

When are we going to be able to go back to church?

This is the big question on everyone's mind. The short answer is: We don't know.

Why is this? Well, our first priority is keeping people safe. Medical experts have told us, and our local and state leaders have decreed, that the best thing we can do to keep from getting Covid-19 and to keep others from getting it, is two things: **wear a mask** over our mouth and nose, and **keep at least 6 feet away** from everybody. So being in a crowd is not a good idea at this time. Being in an enclosed space with others is not a good idea. And being in contact with others for longer than a few minutes is not a good idea. We also know that any kind of singing, chanting, or yelling near others can spread the virus even farther than 6 feet.

Along with that, we need to protect people over 70 years old (or 65, or 60?), very young children, and anyone with any kind of underlying medical situation. Look at our church family at St. John's. Many of us fall into one or more of these categories. Heaven forbid that we gather too early and one of our dear members gets sick. And we have seen that not everyone who gets sick survives, even young adults. This virus is such a mystery. Researchers are now thinking that it may really be more of a vascular disease rather than exclusively a respiratory one. We are learning new things every day that will eventually teach us how to live in community with this disease.

If we were to come together anytime soon in our church building, we would need to follow a number of safety precautions: Only 10 people in the building at any one time (we would need to "make reservations"), only one person through a doorway at one time, keep 6 feet or more apart, no touching, no singing, no communion, no coffee hour, everyone wearing masks. So figuring that we would have these participants: our priest (and his wife?); two ushers, one in each doorway; an acolyte; the organist; a reader. And we would need to save probably two spots for anyone who showed up not realizing that we were limited in number. So apart from these worship leaders, we would only be able to have four or five people in the congregation, sitting in family groups, spread out in the pews. Is this a reasonable way to open our building?

On the other hand, we at St. John's now meet together four times a week online. We have people joining us virtually on Sundays from nearby parishes that don't currently have a priest; and from Canada, Florida, Tennessee, and even from Australia. We have a former parishioner joining us from North Carolina for our Wednesday Hug~A~Mug coffee hours and our Thursday Bible studies, too. We have people who are confined to their homes who have been able to join our Facebook Live Sunday services for the first time in years. And we at St. John's are very grateful that not one of us has contracted the virus to date! Thank the Lord!

The church is NOT closed; only the building is closed for now. And we are doing this not out of fear, but out of love. We wear our masks, we keep 6+ feet apart, we wash our hands, we see our loved ones virtually, we call our friends to check in with them, we send money instead of manpower to Karing Kitchen and a check instead of food to Church on the Rock's food bank, all not out of fear, but out of love. And we do it cheerfully.

St. John's is our parishioners. St. John's is here. St. John's is worshiping. St. John's is studying God's word. St. John's is having laughs together as we share stories and games online. St. John's is working harder than ever to be the body of Christ in the world, to each other, and to our neighbors.

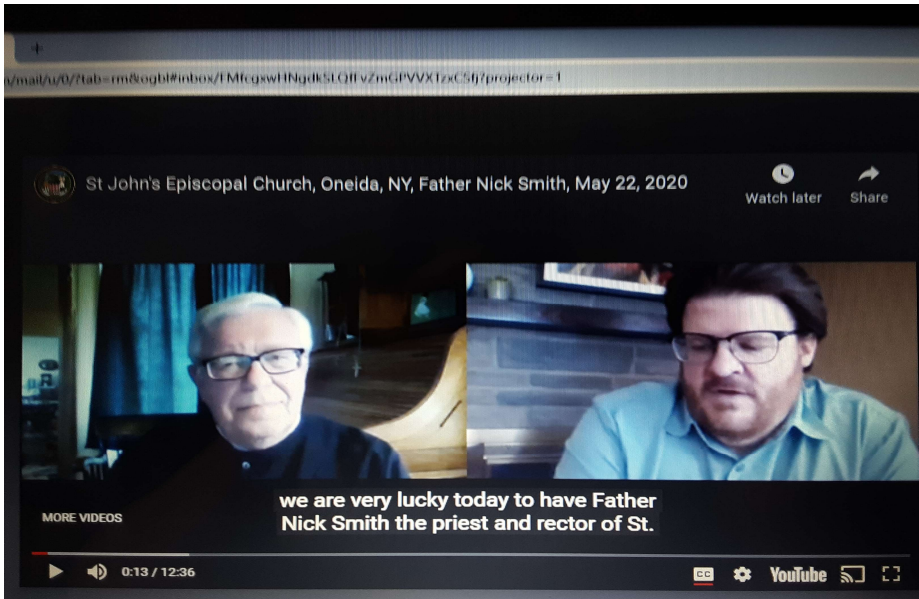
Praise God!

Fr. Nick

INTERVIEW

On May 22nd, Fr. Nick was interviewed by Madison County Historian Matt Urtz, who is collecting a digital record of the way in which the county institutions, businesses, schools, and families are adapting to life in a pandemic. You can view the youtube video of that interview by following this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zj-m-ygGG0c&feature=youtu.be>



CLASS OF 2020

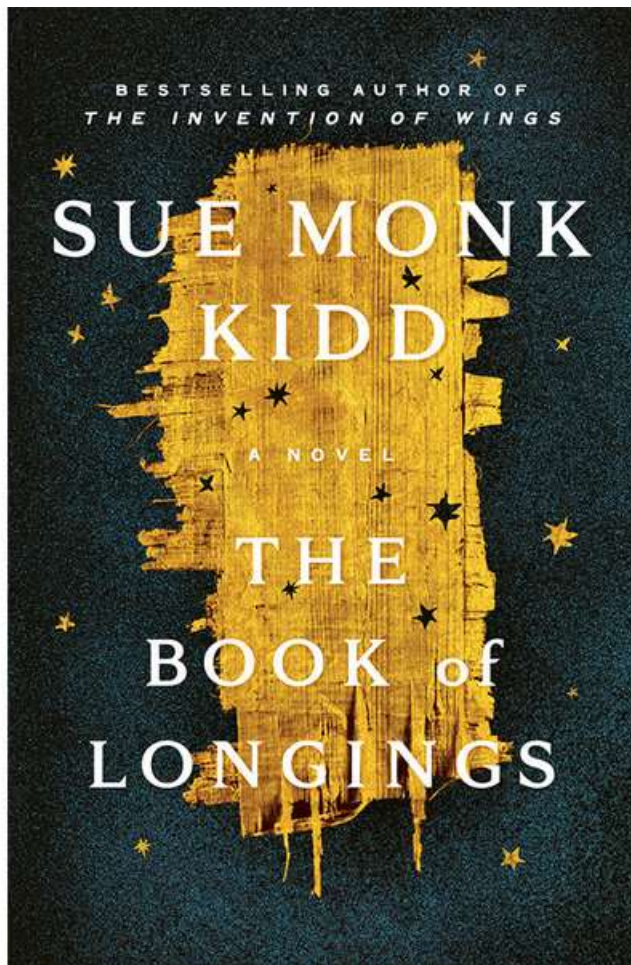


Congratulations to Thomas Campanie, who is in the Top Ten of the Oneida class of 2020. He is the grandson of Gisela and Tom Campnie.

[Laura's Book Corner](#)

Anyone who knows me well knows I LOVE books, ALL BOOKS. Big or small, I love them all. Being so, I decided that from time to time why not suggest a book or review a book our St. John's parish might enjoy. Anyone in the parish that would like to join in, I greatly encourage you. If you have a great book that you have read or plan on reading, let's hear about it. Maybe it's a special book from childhood or a book that holds a special memory for you. Maybe it's a book you have read for a book club or maybe it's just a book that you have heard is great and plan to read.

I would like to start things off with this book I am looking forward to reading:



Brief Synopsis: **Fiction Book**, What if Jesus was married? "I am Ana. I was the wife of Jesus of Nazareth." Grounded in historical research. A woman's courageous struggle living in a time and culture devised to keep her silent.

Too Blessed To Be Stressed

Our ongoing **ZOOM** activities at St. John's:

Wednesdays: Hug A Mug Coffee Hour (**New Time**) 930 a.m. to 1030 a.m.

Thursdays: Bible Study @ 630 p.m.

Saturdays: Zoom Partys !!! 8P.M. It may be trivia or it may be funny hats you just never know what exciting ideas Father Nick will come up with next. No matter what, it's ALWAYS FUN !!!

Sundays: Church Service on Facebook Live @ 930 a.m. Please Join Us !

FOOD PANTRY

Please continue to **not** bring items to the church but instead make a cash donation to these organizations below:

Karing Kitchen
116 W. Grove St.
Oneida, N.Y. 13421

Church on the Rock
164 Madison St.
Oneida, N.Y. 13421

Food Bank of CNY
7066 Interstate Island Rd
Syracuse, N.Y. 13209

EASTER FLOWER DEDICATION

Our gorgeous Easter Flowers were dedicated this year by:

- ❖ Doug & Gerrie Miller
- ❖ Fr. Nick & Gale Smith, in Thanksgiving “for our St. John’s Family”
- ❖ Norita Kane, in Thanksgiving “for all my family”
- ❖ John & Carol Reinhardt, in Memory of Carl & Pauline Maxeiner, & Kenneth & Kathryn Reinhardt; and in Thanksgiving for “our children and grandchildren”
- ❖ Shelly & Tom Sears, in Memory of Grace & Bruce Olin and Tom & Althea Sears; and in Thanksgiving “for our children and grandchildren and friends”

We thank our parishoners for decorating our church so beautifully this year!



God Sightings



Gisela Campanie has shared with us an updated God sighting from a year ago. On the left a tulip from last Spring as she writes “**God’s seed growing in unexpected places.**” On the right the same single tulip has sprouted in a different space on her hill **this** Spring, and her thought “**God shows us isolation can be good**” (or, at least, healthy,I think)

ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

341 Main St.

Oneida, N.Y. 13421

Phone: (315) 363-1940

Bishop: The Rt. Rev. Dr. DeDe Duncan Probe

Rector: The Very Rev. Arthur W. Smith

Parish Administrator: John Reinhardt

Treasurer: John MacMullen

Clerk of the Vestry: Valerie Hill

Senior Warden: Susan Slaunwhite

Junior Warden: Leslie Zebrowski

Vestry:

Sandra Aylesworth

Sheila Aylesworth

Cathy English

Valerie Hill

Ann Hodgins

Shelly Sears

Laura Weismore

Shane Weismore

Beth Wieland

Loving God, by your grace you have gathered us from many walks of life to become a loving family at St. John's. Help us to sustain the miraculous love within this parish, and guide us in sharing this love with our neighbors. All this we ask through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Amen.

Please submit Evangelist articles to Laura Weismore by the 15th of each month. snowkittens7311@gmail.com